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Tribunal Russell  
(H. Edelstein)

To the Bertrand Russell Tribunal II°

I deeply regret to be unable to attend the Tribunal's first session due to other commitments I have, also related to Chile. I will be engaged in a two-month speaking throughout the United States, in which the two main objectives are: 1) fund-raising and 2) educating and raising the level of consciousness of the Northamerican people with regard to what really happened in Chile: its meaning, implications, and the future tasks of world-solidarity.

Even though I'll be absent for the March 31st meeting. I would like to briefly stress a few points gathered from my personal experience, before and after the coup.

First of all I want to point out President Allende's personal repulsion for violence and his peace-loving nature. Throughout his three years of government I had seldom seen a country where freedom and democracy were more highly practiced and respected. There might have been certain errors as far as the economic politic was concerned but the Popular Unity Government ruled within the framework of the Law and the Constitution and its goals and aims were noble.

It is a fact that its support was growing and that the workers did feel that they were actually represented by their Government. A proof of this was the March Parliamentary Elections where the Popular Unity Coalition increased its percentage to 44%. This was the last "legal" card that the rightists and their foreign allies played. Since they failed to obtain the 2/3 necessary to legally depose the President. After this they realized that the only way to overthrow the legally-elected Government was through violence. From July on they started an intense campaign of terrorism, sabotage and financed strikes to create chaos in the country. The outcome was September 11.

There may be critical judgements or disagreements with regard to the Chilean revolutionary process but what cannot, by any means, be justified is the brutality horror and violence unleashed by the Junta to suppress it. They assassinated President Allende and they assassinated Democracy. They have violated all the basic human rights and civil liberties.

I could go on reporting on many cases of persecution, torture and murder that took place during the three months I was there, after the coup, until I was declared "persona non grata" and expelled, for helping hundreds of refugees; but I understand that many of the victims will be present whose testimony will be more eloquent.

I firmly believe that the main task of the Tribunal and of all the groups and individuals who oppose fascism is to channel our energies in order to provide a more efficient and a stronger support movement for the Chilean people in their struggle for liberation, and to condemn the Junta. To this end I consider the following lines of action very important:

- 1) Distribute information about the truth in Chile today. Keep the issue alive through rallies, mass meetings, demonstrations, articles, etc.
- 2) Raise funds
- 3) Press the Governments to stop economic and military aid to the Junta.
- 4) Engage in a wide campaign to free political prisoners in Chile
- 5) Press the Junta for safeconducts for the political leaders that remain in the different Embassies
- 6) Encourage the boycott of arms sent to the Junta; (Longshoreman's Unions, etc.)

Knowing the long democratic tradition of the Chilean people and the long heritage of organized struggle and high political consciousness of the working class, I am certain that they will prove victorious in their struggle against fascism.

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Harald Edelstam

Primer Ambassador of Sweden to  
Chile.